

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 11537 061841Z

42

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 AID-05 ACDA-05 OMB-01

TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 MC-02

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P R 061832Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9140

INFO AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 11537

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, ML, UV, EAID

SUBJECT: MALI-UPPER VOLTA BORDER DISPUTE: LOME MEDIATION
COMMISSION

REF: STATE 103494

SUMMARY: QUAI BELIEVES THAT THE TEMPERATURE OF THE
MALI-UPPER VOLTA DISPUTE HAS LOWERED DURING PAST FEW
DAYS AND INDICATES THAT LAMIZANA WILL SHORTLY REQUEST
MEETING OF CHIEFS OF GOVERNMENT OF CONTENDING PARTIES
AND MEDIATION COMMISSION. QUAI THINKS RISK OF
HOSTILITIES IS LOW SO LONG AS TRAORE AND LAMIZANA HOLD
POWER. HOWEVER, INTERNAL VOLTAN SITUATION IS DISQUIETING
AND FRENCH DO NOT PRECLUDE LAMIZANA'S FALL WITH RESULT-
ANT INCREASED RISK OF HOSTILITIES. END SUMMARY

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PAGE 02 PARIS 11537 061841Z

1. IN RESPONSE TO OUR QUERY ABOUT FRENCH VIEWS REQUESTED

REFTEL, QUAI DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR AFRICA REMOVILLE REVIEWED SITUATION BEGINNING WITH CEAO MEETING AT NIAMEY. THAT MEETING PROVIDED EXCUSE FOR LAMIZANA AND TRAORE TO GET TOGETHER AND FRENCH HOPED IT WOULD MOVE MEDIATION PROCESS FORWARD. THE INSERTION IN THE CEAO COMMUNIQUE OF THE SENTENCE CRITICIZING UPPER VOLTA FOR ITS TREATMENT OF MALIAN OFFICIALS IN OUAGADOUGOU WAS DESIGNED TO UNBLOCK THE SITUATION. IN FACT, IT WAS POSITIVE FOR MALI IN THE SENSE THAT IT ALLOWED TRAORE TO MAKE THE GESTURE OF ACCEPTING THE MILITARY SUBCOMMISSION'S VISIT TO WHICH HE HAD BEEN UNABLE TO AGREE BEFOREHAND. THIS IN TURN ALLOWED FOR FURTHER PROGRESS IN THE LEGAL SUBCOMMISSION AND TRAORE ALSO RELEASED TWO VOLTAN PRISONERS.

2. ON THE VOLTAN SIDE, HOWEVER, THE CRITICISM WAS HARD TO SWALLOW. LAMIZANA WAS ACCUSED OF WEAKNESS, HE DEVELOPED SOMETHING OF A GUILT COMPLEX AND EVEN BEGAN TO ENVISAGE RESIGNING. THE VOLTANS FELT ISOLATED AND IT WAS AT THIS POINT, REMOVILLE SAID, THAT RASH ACTION WAS MOST LIKELY.

3. IT WAS THEN THAT THE FRENCH TOLD THE MALIANS THAT THEY WOULD DELIVER SMALL ARMS FOR THE INFANTRY AND LIGHT ARMORED VEHICLES TO UPPER VOLTA, EXPLAINING THAT THESE "MODEST" SHIPMENTS WOULD NOT CHANGE THE BALANCE IN THE REGION'S ARMED FORCES. THE SHIPMENTS HAD THE DESIRED PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT ON THE VOLTANS WHO, BECAUSE THEY FELT REASSURED, WERE "LESS LIKELY TO ACT FOOLHARDILY". LAMIZANA WAS ABLE TO SILENCE HIS YOUNG TURKS FOR A WHILE BUT, REMOVILLE ADMITTED, NEEDS A DIPLOMATIC VICTORY TO KEEP THEM IN LINE.

4. REMOVILLE SAID THAT TEMPERATURES HAVE FALLEN IN THE LAST TWO DAYS AND THAT WITH THE WITHDRAWAL OF MALIAN TROOPS FROM THE DISPUTED AREA, LAMIZANA PLANS SHORTLY TO ASK EYADEMA TO CONVOKE A MEETING AT LOME OF THE SIX CHIEFS OF GOVERNMENT EITHER AT THE END OF MAY OR THE END OF JUNE. THE FRENCH REMAIN OPTIMISTIC THAT THE RISKS OF CONFLICT ARE NOT GREAT SO LONG AS LAMIZANA AND TRAORE ARE IN CHARGE.

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PAGE 03 PARIS 11537 061841Z

5. HOWEVER, REMOVILLE CONTINUED, LAMIZANA HAS ACCEPTED AN INVITATION TO VISIT CANADA IN MID-MAY AND WILL BE ABSENT FROM OUAGADOUGOU FROM MAY 10 TO 20, INCLUDING STOPOVERS IN PARIS ON HIS WAY TO AND FROM CANADA. REMOVILLE INDICATED THAT LAMIZANA HAD TWICE BEFORE POSTPONED VISITS TO CANADA AND THAT THE CANADIAN FOREIGN MINISTER, UNFORTUNATELY, TWISTED HIS ARM THIS

TIME WHEN THE PRESIDENT'S POSITION IS VERY WEAK
DOMESTICALLY. SHOULD LAMIZANA BE OVERTHROWN, REMOVILLE
THOUGHT THE RISKS OF HOSTILITIES WOULD BE GREATLY
INCREASED.
RUSH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARBITRATION, DISPUTES, BOUNDARY DETERMINATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975PARIS11537
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750158-1013
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750577/aaaacspj.tel
Line Count: 120
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE 103494
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 MAY 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <01 OCT 2003 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MALI-UPPER VOLTA BORDER DISPUTE: LOME MEDIATION COMMISSION
TAGS: PBOR, EAID, ML, UV
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006